

## THE DESERT PEOPLE

883 As previously mentioned, boys are free to go to other villages when their  
494 help is not needed at home. Girls' trips to school on the bus are exceptions to the rule of constant female chaperonage. Sometimes school children get off the bus in another village to visit overnight in the home of relatives; mothers occasionally complain that their daughters stop in other villages rather than come home to help with the work. However, there is no worry concerning their safety, for the bus-driver brings word of their whereabouts, and they are assured a welcome in the home of any relative. Adolescents not in school use the bus to reach relatives in time of sickness, to help with the harvest, or just to visit.

883 A young Papago rarely loses his faith in the medicine man, though it may  
756 be dormant during any time he spends in boarding school. However, the adolescents begin to realize that there are some sicknesses with which the white doctor can cope more adequately than the medicine man. But the youth makes an ill-defined distinction between white men's diseases and Indian diseases, and he sometimes asks why animals do not seem to make white people sick. So he is often confused as to what to do when illness strikes and perhaps tries several courses to be on the safe side: he may take medicine prescribed by the white nurse in the morning, ask for a half-native rosary service in the afternoon, and have the medicine men in to sing and communicate with the spirits at night.

883 On the Reservation the Papago youth has little more contact with whites  
430 than he did as a youngster. Tourists have never swarmed to Papago villages as they do to the pueblos, for the Desert People are not romantic in appearance, and their principal extant ceremonies are not open to public view.<sup>2</sup> Buyers of cattle and baskets come, but they do not stay long. Older boys, who often herd the stock while their elders deal with cattle-buyers, have little to do with the buyers, but they learn what prices to expect and how to bargain.

883 Whites who live on the Reservation—traders, occasional miners, a few mis-  
563 sionaries, and government employees—are familiar figures to the youth of districts in which they live or visit often. Adolescents' contacts with these persons are almost entirely impersonal, and few youths make any effort to change this situation. Some exceptional adolescents will talk readily with whites and are willing to act as interpreters, but in both eastern and western districts teen-age boys and girls are likely to face whites with a rather blank expression and would prefer to watch them unseen. When addressed by a strange white, the young Papago usually replies with "Yes," "No," or "I don't know." Often the brevity of the answer is due as much to difficulty of understanding or fear

2. However, many tourists come to see the old mission on San Xavier Reservation.

## THE CHILD FROM ELEVEN TO EIGHTEEN

of making a ridiculous reply as it is to reserve. The youth will explain to another Papago that he knew what the white was saying, but, unsure of his ability to answer in good English, he just kept quiet.

As a rule, resident whites treat the Indians with friendliness strongly tinged with caution.<sup>3</sup> They respect the Papago and perhaps like certain individuals, but they know that Indians are sensitive in ways unpredictable to whites. The Papago largely reciprocate these attitudes. With rare exceptions, neither group seeks association with the other outside of business hours. The Indians admit that the white man has a peculiar magic which results in economic wealth, and this they frankly covet. But few would care to associate with whites or even in their manner. To them, the Desert People remain "the people."

All teen-age Papago make more frequent trips off the Reservation than do their younger brothers and sisters. Boys go whenever they can be spared at home and can find means of transportation; girls are equally interested but must wait on the convenience of some man of the family. A young person of a western district probably has at least one relative who works in the mine at Ajo and lives there with his family; visits to these relatives are great occasions. The relatives in town live in frame houses or in shacks pieced together out of scrap iron, but even the poorest dwellings are likely to have more furnishings than western Reservation homes. Curtains, bedspreads, and tablecloths are in ordinary use, and all cooking is done indoors. With more leisure and cash, town dwellers go to the movies and buy store food, good clothes, and bootleg liquor. These are momentous matters for the Reservation youngsters, and they are quick to imitate their town kinfolk. Girls readily adopt the town styles of dress, but boys can always be recognized as Reservation Indians by their Stetson hats, Levis, and cowboy boots. Clothing, amusements, and the easier living are powerful incentives for young Papago to go and do likewise, i.e., get a job in town.

A great many youth have been accustomed from childhood to going with their families to work in the cotton fields, but late adolescence bring opportunities for work away from home. Older girls who have more than a smattering of English can get jobs as housemaids in Tucson or Phoenix, and many young girls look forward to this opportunity to live independently for a little while before marriage. A wider variety of work is open to boys. With the increased demand for labor during the war, some Baboquivari lads of sixteen to eighteen left the Reservation for several weeks or months to work on railroads or ranches. Since the Papago are known as good workers, they can

3. This paragraph is drawn largely from Ruth Underhill, "Acculturation in the Papago Village of Santa Rosa" (MS).

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983 always get odd jobs, such as mowing lawns, in the cities. Almost every youth  
464 in the western districts works at the Ajo mine at sometime between the ages  
[465] of eighteen and thirty. Here at unskilled labor he can earn \$3.00 a day; in war-  
time wages ran as high as \$7.00.

883 Papago youth in mines, in cotton fields, or on ranches work side by side with  
466 other Indians or Mexicans and have little direct contact with whites. White  
563 employers treat the Indians with friendliness and often make concessions to  
retain good workers, but away from work the Indians live together or with  
Mexicans and Chinese in the poorer quarters of the city, so that it is the lower  
strata of economic life in Arizona with which they become familiar. They do  
not, however, experience some of the discriminations endured by minority  
groups in many parts of the country: most cafes serve Indians, and they are  
not segregated at the movies and other public places.

883 Young people working off the Reservation are relatively free from family  
593 influence, and, though many send part of their wages home, they still have  
273 much more money to spend than they ever had before. Now and then girls on  
[548] their own in the city drift into trouble and are sent home, but they seldom  
become recognized prostitutes. Boys are likely to spend a good deal of their  
new-found wealth on liquor; their families at home expect the boys to do  
some drinking, still they worry lest the lads become involved in brawls that  
will lead to the white man's jail.

883 The youth himself is terrified of the law. Instead of being reassured by the  
671 supposedly impersonal and impartial character of white men's justice, he fears  
what seems to him its rigid inflexibility. If he does wrong at home, his family  
may lecture him or even call in the village elders to talk to him about the error  
of his ways, but the youth knows that he will be judged on his own merits and  
not on what is written down in a white man's book. Most important, he will  
not be shut up far from his family and his desert.

883 Sometimes young people marry when they leave the Reservation to take  
582 jobs. By and large, however, they go for only short periods or at most a few  
years. Family ties may become tenuous, but they are seldom broken. The wage-  
earner usually sends money home and expects to return to the village  
some day.

## GETTING READY FOR MARRIAGE

562 Papago boys and girls do not associate in unchaperoned groups, for the girls  
[786] are kept under constant surveillance. In the old days a girl who went unaccom-  
panied away from the house cluster was considered fair game for any man or  
boy. Even today in her home village a girl never goes anywhere alone, unless

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233 small. Most cattle in the 18th and early 19th Centuries were probably semi-wild and formed only a minor part of the subsistence base of the Papago.

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● 563 Soon after the Gadsden Purchase of 1853 non-Indian ranchers began moving into the area of the main reservation, most of which, until 1917, was public domain. There are no accurate figures on the extent of non-Indian ranching during the years prior to 1917. Large ranches, however, were established in various areas of what is now the main reservation and these were later acquired by the federal government for the benefit of the Papago.

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361 Cattle ranching by Indians was on a small scale prior to the drilling of the first wells for stock water in the early 1900's. There thus was added to the traditional Papago well settlement (near an assured supply of water for the winter season) and the field settlement (near the flood-water fields used in the summer) a third recognizable type of settlement, the ranch. A. F. Mark has tabulated the number of identifiable Indian ranch locations between 1850 and 1960 (Mark, 1960, Tables 4 and 5). In 1900 there were six such locations. Another 14 were established by 1925, and another 12 by 1960. Because some were abandoned through the years, there were a total of 23 Papago ranch and grazing locations in 1960.

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233 These data support the inference that livestock raising began to have substantial economic significance for

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Table 14. Irrigable Land Use and Acreages  
Farmed by Papago and Non-Indians,  
Papago Reservations, 1955-1962

| Irrigated Areas<br>and Use | Calendar Year |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                            | 1955          | 1956  | 1957  | 1958  | 1959  | 1960  | 1961  | 1962  |
| <u>San Xavier</u>          |               |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Irrigable Acres            | 1,376         | 1,225 | 1,225 | 1,225 | 1,284 | 1,290 | 1,307 | 1,307 |
| Acres Irrigated            | 677           | 399   | 643   | 525   | 775   | 964   | 942   | 532   |
| By Papago                  | 677           | 399   | 371   | 288   | 120   | 88    | 105   | 45    |
| By Non-Indians             | -0-           | -0-   | 271   | 237   | 655   | 876   | 854   | 487   |
| Acres Idle                 | 699           | 886   | 583   | 700   | 509   | 326   | 259   | 775   |
| <u>Chuichu</u>             |               |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Irrigable Acres            | 1,612         | 1,669 | 1,678 | 1,678 | 1,678 | 1,678 | 1,678 | 1,678 |
| Acres Irrigated            | 1,324         | 1,288 | 1,360 | 1,034 | 1,028 | 560   | 1,095 | 740   |
| By Papago                  | 1,324         | 1,288 | 1,360 | 1,034 | 1,028 | 560   | 1,095 | 740   |
| By Non-Indians             | -0-           | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   |
| Acres Idle                 | 288           | 381   | 318   | 644   | 650   | 1,118 | 583   | 938   |
| <u>Gila Bend</u>           |               |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Irrigable Acres            | 212           | 385   | 380   | 346   | 346   | 346   | 480   | 370   |
| Acres Irrigated            | 212           | 385   | 380   | 346   | -0-   | 73    | 160   | 321   |
| By Papago                  | -0-           | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   |
| By Non-Indians             | 212           | 385   | 380   | 346   | -0-   | 73    | 160   | 321   |
| Acres Idle                 | -0-           | -0-   | -0-   | -0-   | 346   | 273   | 320   | 49    |

Table 15. Acresage and Value of Crops Grown  
on Irrigated Land in 1962, Papago Reservations

| Crop                | Chuichu         |          | San Xavier      |          |                     |           | Gila Bend           |          |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|----------|
|                     | Indian<br>Acres | Value    | Indian<br>Acres | Value    | Non-Indian<br>Acres | Value     | Non-Indian<br>Acres | Value    |
| Garden              | 5               | \$ 2,500 | 17              | \$ 8,500 | 31                  | 0         | 0                   | 0        |
| Cotton              | 115             | 47,840   | 8               | 3,000    | 246                 | \$ 82,900 | 61                  | \$23,000 |
| Small<br>Grains     | 200             | 15,975   | 20              | 340      | 210                 | 19,230    | 260                 | 17,342   |
| Forage &<br>Pasture | 400             | 16,000   | 0               | 0        | 0                   | 0         | 0                   | 0        |
| Totals              | 740             | 82,315   | 45              | 12,440   | 487                 | 102,130   | 321                 | 40,342   |

Gross value of Indian crops \$ 94,755  
 Gross value of Non-Indian crops 142,472  
 Gross value of all crops 237,227

The history of irrigated farming at San Xavier and at Chuichu goes back to pre-Spanish times. The San Xavier area was described by Juan Mateo Manje, who visited there in 1697 with Father Kino:

"Here the river runs a full flow of water, though the horses forded it without difficulty. There are good pasture and agricultural lands with a canal for irrigation. The Indians harvest corn, beans, and cotton from which they make cloth to dress themselves. Squash, melons and watermelons were also raised. We counted 800 souls in 186 houses." (Karns, p. 92)

Subsistence farming with irrigation from stream flow continued at San Xavier until 1912 with the number of acres

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## [Arizona Labor Camps]

519 of necessity, much  
52 more reliance is placed by harvest hands on forms of amusement requiring a minimum of equipment and space: drinking, crap shooting, card playing, sexual indulgence.

799 Cotton pickers hauled from towns each day of course  
521 had recreational resources of those population centers at their disposal. They could attend church on Sunday.  
[563] Farmers make little effort to provide access to churches for their employees in labor camps. For some cotton pickers racial discrimination is a problem. As one Negro woman at Marana said, "There's a church over there, all right. But we don't know if they take colored. We don't go." For Catholic Papagos as Catholic Mexican-Americans, this is no problem. But farmers don't provide Sunday transportation to trading towns. The Desert People stay in labor camps on the Sabbath, except for a few from San Xavier who can take a bus home for the day occasionally.

529 About half the Papago women in the camps do some washing on Sunday.<sup>1</sup> An occasional individual picks some cotton, but most simply loaf around camp with nothing constructive to occupy them. Sonora Catholics make their household shrines in a corner of their cabins, and use them. In labor camps where all residents are Papagos, or where there are many of the Desert People in a large camp, they take over an empty cabin to furnish a chapel where they can hold their services.<sup>2</sup> One far-sighted farmer who understood his Papago employees built a fine chapel for them when he constructed a new concrete block camp, but such understanding is indeed rare. Labor camp chapels seem to serve a quarter of the Papago harvest hands.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Based on information from 8 families.

<sup>2</sup>Sonora Catholicism antedates other Christian faiths on the Reservation today, for the belief and practice of Sonora Catholics are remnants of the teachings of the early Spanish missionaries, acquired either directly from the padres, or through other Indians or Mexicans. During the generations when no Catholic clergy came to Papagueria and the nearest priests were far away in Mexico, the faithful carried on as best they could the ceremonies and devotions of the church.

[178] "With the absence of priests and the passage of time, much of the Roman creed and ritual vanished. In the Sonora Catholic churches, for example, there are no Mass, no hymns and prayers in Latin, no confession, and no marriage ceremony. Children are baptized by godparents, and the people bury their own dead." Joseph, Spicer and Chesky, 1948, p. 81-82.

<sup>3</sup>Based on information from 8 families.